

ON BECOMING A GOD IN CENTRAL FLORIDA

Written by

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INT. AAA OFFICES - DAY

SUPER: *Orlando suburbs, 1991.*

A row of identical cubicles. EMPLOYEES in button-downs answer calls, run spreadsheets, sip coffee, type and read memos.

OBIE DALTON, II (V.O.)
*...and God Almighty made this great
nation so that you and your
business could prosper.*

In the final cubicle, the only one not like the others, TRAVIS GILL (30s) listens to a Walkman. He looks like death: circles under his eyes, a tremor, clammy shirt unbuttoned.

But he buzzes with manic energy, clearly amped by the rich southern baritone of OBIE DALTON, II in his headphones.

OBIE DALTON, II
*And you are his anointed. You are
his anointed.*

Travis isn't working -- or at least, not on AAA business. He carefully cuts images of luxury -- sports cars, watches, boats -- from a magazine, gluing them to a VISION BOARD.

OBIE DALTON, II
*People die on the left, and they
die on the right, but guess what?
You can walk on the snake's head.*

A COWORKER lays documents on his desk. Travis doesn't notice. The coworker picks them up and drops them even harder.

Travis still doesn't notice.

INT. RIVER RUSH XTREME! - STOCK ROOM - DAY

Bonnie Raitt's "Something to Talk About" plays from a little steel boom box.

Inches away from a dirty mirror over a rust-stained sink, KRYSTAL GILL (late 20's), applies a generous helping of fuchsia eye shadow and hums along.

OBIE DALTON II (V.O.)
*You don't mean to. It just happens.
When you trust the System.*

She inspects her teased hair and permanent tan lines, hitches up a strapless turquoise dress, runs her tongue over shiny ADULT BRACES. She's gorgeous, in a NASCAR kind of way.

She gives herself a hard, grim look in the mirror -- steeling herself for something -- grabs her purse and keys, and scoops up her daughter, DESTINEE (10 months).

EXT. RIVER RUSH XTREME! - ENTRANCE AREA - DAY

RIVER RUSH XTREME! is a B-grade waterpark for Central Florida families who don't want to shell out for Disney. Slides, wave pool, lazy river, full capacity with a couple hundred guests.

Krystal hurries to the parking lot.

ERNIE (O.S.)

Krystal!

Her body sags. Her manager, ERNIE CHRISTIANSEN (late 30s), stops her. Ernie is country-big with smooth cheeks, sharp-parted hair and unflagging optimism. He was probably breastfed until he was six.

ERNIE

I know you want to get out of here,
but some kids are smoking wacky
tobacky behind Mister Twister--

KRYSTAL

So tell them to stop.

ERNIE

--and the nacho tank exploded.

Krystal gives a deep SIGH.

EXT. RIVER RUSH XTREME! - DAY

"Something to Talk About" scores Krystal as she struts, cocktail dress and heels, Destinee on her hip, through the damp, dirty, low-rent water park.

She approaches a twisty slide and ducks underneath, where two HUSKY TEENS flick a joint away. Between her outfit and her demeanor, they're speechless.

KRYSTAL

Concessions has two pizzas left.
Y'all want them?

They're stoned 13-year-olds; of COURSE they want pizza.

KRYSTAL

Clean up the nacho spill and
they're yours.

She snatches a baggie of weed from the chubbier one's waistband and stuffs it in her bra.

KRYSTAL
I'm keeping this.

She heads for the parking lot.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

A 1986 Cadillac Coup Deville with a "FAM!" bumper sticker drives down a flat, endless highway surrounded by marsh.

OBIE DALTON, II (V.O.)
...you're doing it.

INT. TRAVIS'S CAR - DAY

Travis drives, fixing his tie in the rearview mirror. He reaches for a coffee cup, but it's empty. He throws it in the backseat, where it lands with dozens of other empty cups and reams and reams of PAMPHLETS that say "The Dalton System!".

OBIE DALTON, II
You're finally living for you.
You're in control.

He nods off. He SLAPS himself to wake up, CRANKS the volume.

OBIE DALTON, II
Because you've made a choice.
You've chosen success.

EXT. AIRPORT RAMADA INN - DAY

Krystal parks far from any other cars -- hundreds, each with a FAM! bumper sticker -- and stares at the hotel with dread.

OBIE DALTON, II (V.O.)
You're going to every rally.

She takes a monster hit of a sloppily-rolled joint.

PRELAP: a thunderous crescendo of CROWD NOISE.

INT. AIRPORT RAMADA INN - BALLROOM - DAY

300 FLORIDIANS, ages 20-70, stomp their feet and jostle for position to get a view of a stage. Rock concert? Graduation? No. It's a Multi-Level Marketing rally.

OBIE DALTON II (V.O.)
The rallies are where we lift one
another up.

AMERICAN FLAGS. SWEET GUITAR LICKS. PYROTECHNICS.

A HYPE MAN leads the crowd in synchronized CLAPPING beneath a banner that reads "Founders American Merchandise: Your FAM!"

FOUNDERS HYPE MAN
 ...your next speaker is closer than
 a brother to me. He's my upline.
 Because of him, I'm gonna retire
 rich as heck at thirty! He went
 Jefferson last year at age twenty-
 four, and you better believe he's
 going Washington this year!

The crowd GASPS, CHEERS.

FOUNDERS HYPE MAN
 Here he is, folks: Cody Bonar!

CODY BONAR (25), beady-eyed in pleated khakis and a blazer, jogs onstage to a crowd going apeshit. Cody was bottle-fed as an infant. By his housekeeper.

Cody slaps the hype man on the back and yells into the mic:

CODY
 WHO'S FIRED UP?!

CROWD
 Fired up! Fired up! Fired up!

INT. AIRPORT RAMADA INN - MEN'S ROOM - DAY

The crowd's chanting fades as a very sweaty Travis paces, Walkman in hand. In his headphones:

OBIE DALTON, II
 ...and I told him, Ron, if this
 president thing doesn't work out--

He hits fast forward.

OBIE DALTON, II
 --the last four Miss Venezuelas--

Rewind.

OBIE DALTON, II
 --magnificent birds, only twelve in
 captivity, four of which are in my--

Fast forward.

OBIE DALTON, II
--the moments that define a man.

Travis exhales. He's found what he was looking for.

OBIE DALTON, II
Just look yourself in the eye and
say: "I've earned this."

Travis stares at himself in the mirror, takes a deep breath--

The door swings open and Krystal walks in, mutters a greeting, and hands off Destinee.

KRYSTAL
Jesus, Travis. You're sweating
through your jacket. Here.

She pulls off his jacket and shirt and hangs them under a hand-dryer, turns it on.

TRAVIS
Why did you bring Destinee?

She goes into her purse, finds some maxi pads and band-aids.

KRYSTAL
Because the 300 dollars you spent
on tickets for this rally is 300
dollars we can't spend on a sitter.

She band-aids the maxi pads to his sweaty armpits. Travis searches for her eyes, unsuccessfully.

TRAVIS
This is for our dream. For us.

KRYSTAL
That quit working for me a while
ago.

Travis hangs his head, stung, then looks up, face scrunched.

TRAVIS
Why do you smell like marijuana?

INT. AIRPORT RAMADA INN - BALLROOM - NIGHT

The crowd CLAPS, WHISTLES, CHANTS.

CODY
Who's ready to meet some soon-to-be
Bronze Jeffersons?!

The crowd makes some noise. They're ready to meet some soon-to-be Bronze Jeffersons... whatever that means.

CODY

Married folks, back me up: when
your love is strong, your business
gets stronger, right?

The crowd AGREES.

CODY

I know this couple pretty darn
well, and lemme tell you: the sky's
the limit for these lovebirds!

INT. AIRPORT RAMADA INN - MEN'S ROOM - NIGHT

It's a full-blown FIGHT. Travis paces in his undershirt, his shirt/jacket still under the hand dryer. Destinee WAILS.

KRYSTAL

--What the hell are you talking
about?! I'm here! For you!

TRAVIS

For me? Will our boat be for me?
Will your diamond earrings be--

A pimpled STAGE MANAGER pokes his head in. The fight pauses.

STAGE MANAGER

Um. We're ready for you guys.

INT. AIRPORT RAMADA INN - BALLROOM - DAY

The crowd is on their feet, thunderously BANGING metal chair backs. Cody grins, working them like a pro.

CODY

Give it up for the Gills!

Travis jogs out like a "Price is Right" contestant, fist pumping. He greets Cody with a high five and a bear hug. He's already forgotten the fight in the bathroom.

Krystal walks out behind him, Destinee on her hip, dutifully reaching her mark. She squints into the harsh spotlight.

CODY

Travis is the hardest working man
I've ever met. How else do you snag
a bodacious babe like Krystal here?

WOLF WHISTLES and WOOS. She forces a grimacing smile.

CODY

Every day, Travis wakes up and
clocks in at his J-O-B at Triple A--

The crowd BOOS at the mention of a job.

CODY

But this Friday, Travis Gill kisses
that goodbye! Limo, tux, the works!

The crowd EXPLODES with applause.

CODY

So when he clocks out for the last
time, Triple A better see all of us
cheering on Travis's dream!

Travis sobs with joy, hugging Cody again. Krystal claps, not
quite enthusiastically. Cody gets into a rhythm:

CODY

Lemme ask y'all something: Do you
think the Gills go to the movies?

CROWD

Heck no!

CODY

Do they run marathons together?

CROWD

Heck! No!

CODY

You think they're wasting time on
any dumb hobby that's not gonna put
them on an island, retired at 35?

CROWD

HECK! NO!

CODY

Are you gonna find Tide brand
detergent in the Gills' cabinets?

CROWD

HECK! NO!

CODY

It's all FAM brand, baby! Think
they trust the Dalton System?

CROWD

HECK! YEAH!

Cody leans forward, smirking.

CODY
Is business good for the Gills?

CROWD
HECK! YEAH!

Cody waits for complete silence. This is his favorite part:

CODY
Is that 'cause Travis hits the road
to recruit one night a week?

CROWD
No!

CODY
Two nights?

CROWD
No!

CODY
Three? Four?

CROWD
No! No!

CODY
Heck no! Travis Gill is out working
the road every night!

CROWD
Ev-ry NIGHT! Ev-ry NIGHT!

These people love to chant. As they get LOUDER and more RABID, Krystal's eyes dart around nervously.

CODY
What're you doing to celebrate
tonight, Travis?

He puts the mic in front of Travis, who manages to choke out:

TRAVIS
I've got a pitch in Tallahassee!

CODY
YOU HEAR THAT? He's a MACHINE!

The crowd goes fucking insane with the "ev-ry NIGHT" chant.

INT. TRAVIS'S CAR - NIGHT

The chant fades. Travis drives alone, chugging coffee and pulling maxi pads from his armpits.

OBIE DALTON, II
*...I make millionaires, folks, and
I make 'em by the fistful. That's
what the Dalton System is all
about. And these tapes are how I do
it. Your upline will provide them.
Two per week.*

Travis checks his mirror. Empty road. Eyes forward--

A MOOSE strolls nonchalantly into his path.

Travis blinks. The moose disappears. He blinks, it reappears. He blinks again, and the moose is inches from his car.

OBIE DALTON, II
And if they don't?

He SLAMS the brakes and SPINS the wheel, losing control of the car and running off the road.

INT. GILL HOME - NIGHT

Krystal, exhausted, tries to rock a crying Destinee back to sleep. On the coffee table before her is a big chart that says RECRUITING SCHEDULE.

Krystal disdainfully shoves it aside, lays a HALF-SEQUINED NURSING BRA and a bag of SEQUINS in its place.

OBIE DALTON, II
*You tell 'em Obie Dalton the Second
says "Why the heck not?"*

She lays Destinee in her crib, plugs in a hot glue gun and continues her project.

EXT. TRAVIS'S CAR - NIGHT

Stars fade as the sun peeks over the horizon, glinting off the swamp. It's quiet. Frogs CROAK.

Tufts of median grass protrude from the trim of Travis's car.

No moose.

INT. TRAVIS'S CAR - NIGHT

Travis hyperventilates. He steadies himself with a whisper:

TRAVIS
Ev-ry NIGHT. Ev-ry NIGHT.

He takes a deep breath and starts the ignition, the tape immediately BLASTING at deafening levels.

OBIE DALTON, II
*...so while you're out driving all
over this great nation, sharing the
Dalton System and changing lives,
who will you be listening to?
Luther Vandross? Sting?*

Travis shifts into drive, pulls back onto the road.

OBIE DALTON, II
*No. You're gonna listen to a
billionaire.*

OPENING CREDITS - ON BECOMING A GOD IN CENTRAL FLORIDA

INT. CAROL'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Krystal, slackjawed and emotionless, stares into space. A hand (not hers) dabs her purple eye shadow off.

CAROL
This color! Oh my.

GIGGLES. Widen to reveal Krystal on a stool with big-haired, buxom CAROL, (48), who removes Krystal's makeup. A dozen FAM LADIES (22-50, white, conservative), watch. Some take notes.

CAROL
When your husband tells you you're
the face of the business, this
isn't what he means.

More GIGGLES. With Krystal's makeup off, Carol applies loads of foundation. Krystal's eyes dart around, agitated.

CAROL
But you like your exotic look! You
think it's fun. Guess what, ladies?

She stops applying mascara for a moment.

CAROL
It's not about you. Your family is
your business, so you're always on
the clock. You gotta look the part.
Your husband wouldn't show up to
work in his football jersey!

CAROL (CONT'D)
What if a downline sees you gassing
up your car in your jammies? Don't
let your choices ruin his
opportunity. You're a team. Sure,
sex sells...

She holds up the makeup remover pad, colored purple.

CAROL
But there's sexy, and there's
trashy. Dolly Parton only gets away
with it 'cause nobody's looking at
her face.

GIGGLES. Krystal can't help herself. She smiles at Carol:

KRYSTAL
Do you own a roller coaster park?

The women look at each other, confused.

KRYSTAL
You know who does? Dolly Parton.

EXT. CAROL'S HOUSE - DAY

Krystal lights a Virginia Slim, sees CAROL'S DAUGHTER (14) painting her toenails black, her Walkman BLASTING Morrissey.

Krystal raises an eyebrow, offers her a cigarette.

CAROL'S DAUGHTER
My mom would kill me.

Krystal tosses her the pack, winks.

KRYSTAL
So don't tell her.

INT. GILL HOME - FOYER - NIGHT

Krystal hurriedly reapplies her purple eye-shadow and arranges tapes, books, and pamphlets promoting "The Dalton System for FAM! Success!" on the entry-way table, with titles like: *DREAM*; *FREEDOM*; *FAITH*; *AMERICA*.

TRAVIS (O.S.)
I asked you to get rid of this.

Travis rushes down the stairs holding a tube of Sensodyne.

KRYSTAL
The FAM stuff hurts my teeth.

TRAVIS

Ernie'll be here in twenty minutes.
What if he sees it?

KRYSTAL

He knows I have sensitive teeth.

TRAVIS

Worse yet, what if Cody sees it?

KRYSTAL

Why would he be in our bathroom?

He glares at her -- watch your tone.

TRAVIS

Cody is taking us Jefferson. He can live in our bathroom if he wants. We can't pick and choose which parts of the Dalton System we follow. 100 percent self-use.

He holds out the toothpaste. She doesn't take it.

TRAVIS

No outside brands. Do you listen to the tapes or just lay them out?

She snatches the toothpaste out of his hand.

INT. GILL HOME - GARAGE - NIGHT

Krystal walks past hundreds of sealed cardboard packages -- all FAM! brand -- on her way to the trash. Travis calls out:

TRAVIS (O.S.)

What did you think of Carol's FAM Values workshop?

She ignores him. She opens the trash can, reconsiders, hides the Sensodyne in a dusty old golf bag.

INT. GILL HOME - FOYER - NIGHT

Cody stands in the foyer with Travis. He holds up one of the tapes -- *Dream a Big Dream*. Krystal reenters.

CODY

...and I'm in a perfect position. I have a direct line to Mr. Dalton.

Krystal calls his bluff:

KRYSTAL
So call him. Tell him to give you a million dollars.

CODY
I'm not going to call a billionaire just to prove that I can.

Travis glares at Krystal. Cody reclaims his role as leader:

CODY
Are we set up at River Rush?

KRYSTAL
Yes.

CODY
Really? I don't want to do all the work of landing this guy and have it fall apart because you didn't--

The DOORBELL rings.

TRAVIS
She did her part. Now it's time for us to work our magic.

Cody gives a confident nod. The two do an involved secret handshake-chest bump. Krystal gets the door.

KRYSTAL
Hello!

Krystal leads Ernie and his wife BETS (35) in. Hugs, kisses.

Bets matches Ernie perfectly. A maternal self-described "hugger" who loves to laugh, but frowns at jokes. 100 percent of their sex has been with one another, and face-to-face.

ERNIE
I know you want to talk business, but I'm here for the casserole!

BETS
Oh, don't mind him.

Cody puts a hand on Ernie's shoulder:

CODY
Tonight's the night, Ernie my man.

INT. GILL HOME - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Though it's not his home, Cody sits at the head of the table. He and Travis lean toward Ernie. Krystal eats without a word.

CODY
...I don't think you understand
what I'm offering here.

ERNIE
Can someone pass the casserole?

Ernie barely listens. Cody talks louder. Ernie grabs the casserole himself.

CODY
I'm talking about getting rich.

Ernie scoops more casserole and pats his belly.

ERNIE
Talk about rich.

Ernie laughs much too loudly. Bets chides him with a look.

ERNIE
I just don't see what's so special
about selling soap door-to-door.

Cody stifles his frustration. Bored of a conversation she's heard dozens of times, Krystal pretends she hears something:

KRYSTAL
You hear that? Destinee must be up.

TRAVIS
I didn't hear anything.

Bets pushes away from the table, also bored.

BETS
I'll join you!

Krystal hesitates, then smiles.

KRYSTAL
Sure.

CODY
Let's take a dip, fellas.

INT. GILL HOME - DESTINEE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Krystal breastfeeds Destinee.

BETS

Travis seems so... focused on his business. How are you two doing?

KRYSTAL

Was the casserole overcooked?

BETS

Oh, no, it was perfect.

Silence. Bets pushes on. Fishing.

BETS

You know, for a while, Ernie just couldn't stop watching Bob Newhart. He was obsessed, quoting Newhart all the time, I mean all the time. Newhart this and Newhart that. Drove me bonkers!

Bets waits for Krystal to respond. Krystal says nothing.

BETS

You know what I mean?

Krystal does, but she isn't interested in discussing it.

KRYSTAL

I'm sure it was overcooked.

Bets forces a weak smile, letting it go.

EXT. GILL HOME - BACKYARD - NIGHT

Cody, Travis, and Ernie lounge on floats in Travis's ABOVE GROUND POOL. There's really only room enough for two.

CODY

...January 20th, 1987, I'm filling up my tank at the Sunoco on Edgewater. Normal day, right? Wrong. Because next to my Nova there's this guy, this *man*, smoking a tightly rolled Cuban while his driver fills up the most expensive car I've ever seen.

He shuts his eyes to relive the memory.

CODY

So I'm standing there like, *who is this?* And he sees me looking.

CODY (CONT'D)
 So he says to me -- this
 billionaire says to me -- "What do
 you do?" I'm fresh out of school,
 and lemme tell ya, I didn't do
 jack. So that's what I told him, "I
 don't do jack." And you know what
 he said?

Cody opens his eyes and smiles as if it's going to be the
 greatest reveal in the history of storytelling.

CODY
 "Me neither". Me. Neither. And he
 winks at me. And hands me his card.
 You want to know who it was?

ERNIE
 Jimmy Carter.

CODY
 Obie Dalton. The second.

ERNIE
 I'm just bustin' your beans. You've
 told this story a bunch of times.

CODY
 It's an important story! There's
 only two Diamond Washingtons on
 earth. He's one of 'em.

ERNIE
 What's with the Washington,
 Franklin, hoozit whatsit gold
 silver bing bong hooha?

Cody rolls his eyes -- *what could be confusing about this?*

CODY
 Let me spell it out. Who are the
 three best founding fathers?

Ernie stares. Travis interjects:

TRAVIS
 Washington, Jefferson, and
 Franklin. In that order.

CODY
 Bingo. IBOs -- Independent Business
 Owners, like Travis and me -- get
 FP -- FAM Points -- for growing our
 businesses.

CODY (CONT'D)

The more FP you have, the higher your Founding Father Level. Within those levels are tiers: bronze, silver, gold. So you start at Bronze Franklin, then Silver Franklin up to gold Franklin, then graduate to Bronze Jefferson and so on. Each promotion to a new tier or level means you earn a higher commission on your business volume. Once you're up and running, you just sit back and watch your FP rise toward heaven: the Washington level. Easy, right?

ERNIE

Clear as mud.

CODY

How about this: Gold Franklin: rich. Gold Washington: very rich.

ERNIE

So if I worked for Founders--

Travis and Cody cringe at the mention of the word.

TRAVIS

--Mr. Dalton prefers we just call it the business, *your business*. You don't work for Founders. You work for yourself. And the Dalton System tells you how!

ERNIE

What kind of company is it if you can't even say the name?

CODY

It's not about Founders. It's about you. Your life. And when this business is life, life is good.

ERNIE

My life is good.

CODY

Your life is okay.

Ernie frowns. Cody leans in, whispers conspiratorially.

CODY

Your life can be magnificent.

INT. GILL HOME - NIGHT

Cody and Travis lead Ernie -- all still shirtless and in their damp bathing suits -- through the house.

QUICK SERIES OF SHOTS: Cody points out FAM! brand products: paper towels; tissues; detergent; dryer sheets; dishwashing fluid; batteries; sponges; protein bars; air freshener; bleach; soap; shampoo; lotion; pots and pans; make-up; and:

CODY
Coffee.

Cody holds up a tin of coffee grounds.

CODY
How much do you spend on coffee?

ERNIE
Geez, don't even talk to me until I've had my morning coffee!

CODY
I'm a regular coffaholic!

TRAVIS
I need a cup of coffee to wake me up enough to make a cup of coffee!

The three crack up. Big belly laughs.

CODY
So imagine having enough FP to make ten, twenty, thirty percent back on every tin of coffee you buy. Sounds nice, right? The Dalton System requires 100% self-use, so imagine thirty percent back on everything you buy. Even better, huh?

ERNIE
..."coffaholic." Man.

CODY
Now imagine that you get a cut of your neighbor's home spending too, just because you did for him what Travis is doing for you. Now imagine getting a cut of your entire neighborhood's home spending. There's no selling. It's just self-use, yours and your neighbors'.

CODY (CONT'D)
Everyone you know, putting money in
your pocket every time they buy
coffee. Detergent. Tissues. Every
single time. Forever. How does that
sound?

Ernie thinks it over.

INT. GILL HOME - FOYER - NIGHT

Travis and Cody show Bets and a damp Ernie to the door.

ERNIE
Sorry to disappoint again.

CODY
When you're at your J-O-B tomorrow,
think about who profits from your
time and sacrifice.

That drains the smile off of Ernie's face just a bit.

CODY
And then take a listen to this.

Cody drops a "Dalton System" tape into Ernie's jacket pocket.
He shuts the door behind Ernie and Bets.

TRAVIS
Gosh, he's stubborn.

CODY
So be stubborn-er. You know how
much FP that water park can get us.

Cody gives Travis a pat. Travis knows what he needs to do. He
rushes outside, leaving Cody and Krystal alone.

Cody watches Krystal clear dishes, zeroing in on her butt.

CODY
Did you get a thighmaster?

She makes a point to ignore him.

EXT. GILL HOUSE - NIGHT

Ernie and Bets head for their car. Travis rushes up.

TRAVIS
Hold up a sec.

ERNIE

Thanks again for having us, Travis,
it was delicious.

Travis steps in front of Ernie. Ernie sidesteps him.

ERNIE

We really should be going. Harold's
stuck with Mrs. Jaskovitz.

Ernie makes a 'yuck' face. He jabs his key into the car door. Travis stops him from opening the door and hands him a pamphlet -- *Portraits of Prosperity*.

TRAVIS

These are all real, honest to
goodness millionaires, just from
following the Dalton System... And
Cody? He's gonna be in this
pamphlet quick as you can sneeze.

Ernie begrudgingly flips through page after page of smiling,
suit-wearing men and reads a passage aloud:

ERNIE

"Dusty Waltrip went Washington in
March of 1989. You're most likely
to find him fishing on his yacht,
the S.S. Free Enterprise."

TRAVIS

There's millionaires at your door,
Ernie. You just gotta let 'em in.

Ernie takes the pamphlet from Travis so that he can go.
Travis doesn't let go of Ernie's hand.

TRAVIS

It's so great you're checking out
Obie's tape. Mentorship from the
man who invented the system. I buy
them at cost. For my downline.

Ernie nods -- 'great, so what?'

TRAVIS

I buy them.

Ernie sighs, lays *Portraits of Prosperity* on the roof of his car, and pulls out his wallet.

ZOOM ON the pamphlet photo of DUSTY WALTRIP (mid 40's, black)
-- handsome, smiling, polished, a turtleneck under his sports coat. He votes republican. Everyone in the pamphlet does.

INT. NONDESCRIPT PAYPHONE AREA - DAY

Dusty Waltrip, our 'portrait of prosperity' -- now bleary-eyed, unshaven, a mess -- yells into the receiver.

DUSTY

It's Dusty Waltrip. I know he's there. Put Obie Dalton the fucking second on the fucking phone. Do it!

He waits. Nothing.

DUSTY

I know I'm on speaker, Obie, I can hear it in the timbre! You coward! You liar! I know it was you!

Dusty's voice softens.

DUSTY

Please call this off. I'm sorry.
I'll never write another word.

AUTOMATED VOICE

Please enter additional coins to--

Dusty SLAMS the receiver against the wall.

DUSTY

--You can't do this to me! I know things! I can fuck up your whole life! I'll fucking ruin your ass!

He breaks down sobbing.

DUSTY

I'll fuck your ass.

WIDEN: A half-full Waffle House smoking section watches Dusty weep. The receiver limply drops from his hand.

INT. CHRISTIANSEN HOME - DAWN

Ernie sneaks through the doorway into his son HAROLD's (9) room. Ernie rapidly flicks the lights on and off, yelling:

ERNIE

Wee-yoo! Wee-yoo! Dad alarm!

Harold GROANS, pulling his bird-themed comforter over his head. A PHANTOM OF THE OPERA poster hangs on the wall.

EXT. CHRISTIANSEN HOME - BACKYARD - DAWN

Ernie tries to play catch with Harold. Harold knocks the ball to the ground, blocking it more than trying to catch it.

ERNIE

You're doing great. Watch it in.
You're a born second baseman. The
thinking man's position.

Harold, disinterested, ROLLS the ball back to Ernie.

EXT. SCHOOL BUS STOP - DAY

Ernie waits with Harold and OTHER KIDS. He's the only parent there. Harold is humiliated. The bus pulls up.

ERNIE

Have a great day!

The other kids laugh. Ernie waves goodbye. Harold doesn't see. Ernie nods to the bus driver. The bus pulls away.

Ernie smiles to himself. He walks back through the sunny middle-class neighborhood, sees a neighbor and waves. Shouts:

ERNIE

Morning, Pete!

PETE barely nods. Ernie waves at MOTHERS powerwalking on the sidewalk. Waves at cars. Waves at everyone.

INT. CHRISTIANSEN HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

Bets hands Ernie a mug of coffee.

BETS

I love seeing you two out there.

Ernie's smile fades for the first time today.

BETS

You're the best dad on earth.

He is, but he doesn't believe her. She kisses his forehead.

EXT. RIVER RUSH XTREME! - DAY

Krystal lugs Destinee in a baby carrier toward the entrance.

The husky stoner teens wait for her to open the park. One puts his fingers in a "v" over his mouth. Krystal ignores it.

INT. RIVER RUSH XTREME! - ERNIE'S OFFICE - DAY

Ernie stands behind his desk and looks out over the empty park. Krystal clocks in. He waves. She nods.

Ernie watches the clock tick towards opening time. He hikes up his pants, ready for action.

QUICK SHOTS - ERNIE'S WORKDAY:

A CUSTOMER SCREAMS in Ernie's face about a coupon... Ernie mops puke in the bathroom... An EMPLOYEE flips Ernie off... Ernie fishes a turd from the wave pool with a skimmer.

INT. RIVER RUSH XTREME - STOCKROOM - DAY

Ernie double checks inventory sheets. Someone's stocked the place with exclusively FAM! goods -- soap, paper towels, toilet paper -- FAM! everything. He frowns.

INT. RIVER RUSH XTREME! - ERNIE'S OFFICE - DAY

Ernie shows Krystal the inventory sheets.

ERNIE

You just up and switched brands without asking?

KRYSTAL

FAM brand stuff is better.

ERNIE

Someone two'd in the wave pool today. Again. It's more two than water at this point. There's no room for your discretion.

KRYSTAL

We can get more for our money.

ERNIE

Let me worry about money.

Krystal SIGHS, annoyed. Ernie feels bad.

ERNIE

Look, I'm sorry for blowing up at you there. You're just trying to help, and Bets and I had such a nice time last night... But Stan's already T'd off at me for leaving early again today.

KRYSTAL

Why do you get to leave early?

ERNIE

Harold's game is today.

KRYSTAL

So tell him we're doing him a favor
and go to your kid's game.

ERNIE

He thought you and I should have a
conversation about chain of...

Krystal rolls her eyes -- *fuck this* -- and charges toward Van
Grundegaard's office.

ERNIE

...command.

But she's gone.

INT. MR. VAN GRUNDEGAARD'S OFFICE - DAY

CLOSE ON the chrome balls of a Newton's Cradle CLACKING.

MR. VAN GRUNDEGAARD (O.S.)

We can't just do things, Mrs. Gill.
We have contracts with our vendors.

WIDEN: MR. VAN GRUNDEGAARD sits under a poster of a chubby
boy on a water slide. Krystal stares him down.

KRYSTAL

No we don't.

MR. VAN GRUNDEGAARD

Well, we have relationships with
our vendors, and those are worth
more than contracts.

KRYSTAL

It's all the same stuff. You were
stocking from six different
companies. If we go all FAM, it
saves hundreds on shipping.

MR. VAN GRUNDEGAARD

No way, no how. I've read all about
that scam, and I won't be pulled--

Krystal stops the Newton's Cradle. CLACKING halts.

KRYSTAL

Sorry. I couldn't concentrate.

MR. VAN GRUNDEGAARD

Well now I can't concentrate!

Krystal SIGHS, draws back the chrome ball. CLACKING resumes.

KRYSTAL

Even if it is a scam, the scam has
nothing to do with the products.

Soap is soap. It saves you money.

It gets my husband FP. Win-win.

Van Grundgaard holds up some 1-ply toilet paper.

MR. VAN GRUNDEGAARD

I don't know what FP is. But I know
TP, and this ain't it.

It's hopeless. She turns to leave.

MR. VAN GRUNDEGAARD

And I'm not running a daycare, by
the way.

She SLAMS the door behind her.

INT. AAA OFFICES - CUBICLE - DAY

Travis mindlessly highlights spreadsheets. His VISION BOARD has filled out: boats, vacation homes, FSU football tickets, a honeymoon picture of him and Krystal. His phone RINGS.

TRAVIS

Travis Gill.

CODY (ON PHONE)

Who's reaping the benefits of your
work right now?

Travis swivels to the corner of his cubicle and cradles the phone cord like a high school kid talking to their crush.

TRAVIS

Only for a few more days.

CODY (ON PHONE)

Ready to take control of your life?

TRAVIS

Yes, sir. Well, broadly, yes. I'm
pretty swamped at this very second.
What are you doing?

CODY (ON PHONE)
Whatever I want.

Click. Dial tone. Travis hangs up the phone. He smiles to himself. What an inspiration.

He peers over his cubicle. Rows and rows of WORKERS with their heads down. Building someone else's fortune. He DIALS.

CODY (ON PHONE)
You've got Bonar.

TRAVIS
I'm ready to take control of my life. What are you doing right now?

CODY (ON PHONE)
Whatever I--

TRAVIS
--No, but really?

INT. AAA OFFICES - LOBBY - DAY

Travis powerwalks towards the exit, then sprints for his car.

INT. TUXEDO RENTAL SHOP - DAY

Cody checks Travis's driving schedule, crossing off leads.

TRAVIS (O.S.)
...She doesn't get that I'm a man.

CODY
So show her you're a man.

TRAVIS (O.S.)
That's all I do. Sometimes they're just not in the mood, I guess. You know how it goes.

CODY
No, I don't know how it goes. Women go wild for a winner, Travis.

Travis bursts out of the changing room in a white tie tux: gloves, tails, the whole nine -- arms spread, spinning like he's trying on a prom dress. Cody APPLAUDS.

CODY
Tell me what you're thinking.

Travis, nearing tears of joy, thinks for a second.

TRAVIS

Their faces. Everyone who ignored me, walked away from me, told their friends not to talk to me. Of everyone in the office who judged me for wearing yesterday's clothes, after driving to Jacksonville and back, catching twenty minutes of sleep in my car. Of all the "stinker-thinkers" who tried to tell me it's some sort of scam.

He does cry now.

TRAVIS

I'm thinking of their faces when they see me in this tux. When they realize it's no scam. When they see the limo, see this--

He gestures down to himself.

TRAVIS

--and see what a winner looks like.

Cody smiles.

CODY

You're ready.

TRAVIS

And you're the best upline in the whole dang world.

They embrace. Travis rests his head on Cody's shoulder.

TRAVIS

You saved me.

CODY

Now let's go save someone else.

INT. CHURCH BASEMENT - DAY

A circle of folding chairs. Close on Travis, eyes welling.

TRAVIS

June 7, 1987. I'm pee-drunk, broke, sleeping in my car because Krystal, the love of my life since prom, had the good sense to kick me out.

He shuts his eyes to relive the memory.

TRAVIS

I come to a meeting, still drunk, remember, Al? I had no hope. I had no way out. I was telling the same old story. Everyone knew who I was, including myself. Except one man. He didn't know me and I didn't know him. And he didn't look at me like everyone else. I had a contagious loser attitude, but he walks right up to me, and this guy, this man says to me, you know what he says? "You look like a millionaire." Me. Like a millionaire. And you want to know who it was?

Travis pauses, takes a deep breath.

EXT. CHURCH BASEMENT - NIGHT

Cody hands business cards to the ALCOHOLICS as they leave:

CODY

Cody. Cody Bonar. You look like a millionaire... Cody. Cody Bonar...

EXT. FIELD - DAY

A dandelion. A child's hand plucks it.

We follow the hand as it takes the dandelion and threads it through a knot in a chain of dandelions. A necklace.

Sweet, smiling, baseball-hatted Harold puts it on. We hear the CLINK of an aluminum baseball bat. WIDEN to reveal...

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - DAY

Harold plays right field. Poorly. Two OUTFIELDERS desperately chase a fly ball that really should have been his.

Ernie SHOUTS from the bleachers:

ERNIE

Harold! Harold! That's yours!

OTHER DADS roll their eyes at Ernie's hopeful encouragement.

LUCAS'S DAD

LUCAS! THAT'S YOU! NOBODY'S GONNA
DO IT FOR YOU! YOU GOTTA DO IT
YOURSELF! YOU GOTTA DO IT YOURSELF!

Harold turns to see LUCAS throw the ball to shortstop. A run scores. Harold walks to where his glove lies on the ground.

ERNIE
I keep saying, "your first step's
back on a pop up."

Everyone ignores him. He keeps trying.

ERNIE
My old man wasn't much of a coach.

Ernie pantomimes drinking.

ERNIE
I'm trying to do better.

LUCAS'S DAD
Maybe coach him to wear his goddang
glove.

Ernie hides his hurt.

EXT. GILL HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Krystal lugs the last River Rush FAM! supplies from her car into the house, Destinee's car seat in her off hand.

INT. GILL HOME - KITCHEN/BEDROOM/KITCHEN - NIGHT

Krystal pores over an open checkbook and a stack of bills. She's smoking a Slim, completely surrounded by discarded FAM! goods. The door SLAMS. Travis hustles for the bedroom.

TRAVIS (O.S.)
Ugh, heckofa day, gotta get into my
driving clothes, long night ahead--

KRYSTAL
We gotta return all this FAM stuff.
River Rush wasn't having it.

TRAVIS (O.S.)
Can't do that, honey.

Travis switches slacks for sweatpants, tucks his dress shirt.

KRYSTAL
You can't retire tomorrow.

TRAVIS
Krystal, I know what I'm--

KRYSTAL

Not yet.

TRAVIS

That River Rush deal gets us enough
FP to go Jefferson, and Cody says--

--Krystal SLAMS her fist against the wall.

KRYSTAL

Jesus, Joseph, and Mary! There is
no River Rush deal. Would've been
great, but Stan said no.

Travis rolls his eyes.

KRYSTAL

So you're not going Jefferson. You
can't leave AAA. We have bills. You
can't buy diapers with fucking FP.

TRAVIS

Oh, real nice! Here come the eff's!

KRYSTAL

We can't afford to do this.

TRAVIS

We can't afford not to do this.

Her tone softens as she pleads:

KRYSTAL

Travis. You're sleeping, what, ten
hours a week? You're delirious.
Forget the business. Listen to me.
I'm your wife. I... I love you.

It's unclear whether either of them believes this to be true.
Then, finally:

KRYSTAL

Founders is a scam.

She's crossed the line. Travis stammers incoherently:

TRAVIS

A scam? You know how embarrassing
it is to be married to a stinker-
thinker? You are my wife. That
means that you need to support and
respect the work I do for you.
'Cause when I climb the mountain,
you get the view.

TRAVIS (CONT'D)
 You think Lucille Dalton gives Obie Dalton The Second guff every time he takes a leap? You think she's saying "eff this" and "eff that" at him?

They return to the kitchen. She drops a plate of meat loaf in front of him, lights another Slim. She's heard this before.

TRAVIS
 No! And it's not about the swears. She trusts him. She loves him. And it's -- the lifestyle that's gonna be a whole new dream for our family -- for Destinee -- it's gonna make our hearts clear and we're gonna have lots of houses! All over the place! Miami! The Alps! Branson! One day you'll wake up in Tahiti and feel my strong hands caress--

Krystal SCOFFS.

KRYSTAL
 --you haven't gotten me off in four years! Four! FAM's gonna fix that?

His voice jumps an octave and he begins gesticulating wildly:

TRAVIS
 Oh, here we go! "You can't get hard, Travis!" "You're barely a man, Travis!" Dr. Mackensie made it very clear that I can't get hard because I'm not sleeping, and guess why I'm not sleeping? For us! You should be thanking me every time I can't get hard! You should be begging me not to get hard!

Krystal drags her Slim and breathes three soft, smoky words.

KRYSTAL
 I don't beg.

She goes to the bedroom, LOCKING the door behind her. Travis, alone in the kitchen, finishes his meal.

INT. GILL HOME - HALLWAY - NIGHT

A hand knocks at the now-locked bedroom door.

KRYSTAL (O.S.)
 I can't do this right now, Travis.

CODY
(gently)
Krystal, it's me. Cody. Cody Bonar.

Jesus Christ. The door opens. Krystal stares at Cody, who has the serene smile of a guy who loves telling women to calm down. Travis stands behind him, staring at his feet.

TRAVIS
I didn't know where else to turn.

Krystal stares at Cody, then at Travis, then Cody...

INT. GILL HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT

...then at Travis, then at Cody again -- *How did this idiot get into my kitchen?*

CODY
You can't return the FAM goods. FP is worth more than money. Giving it back would be bad business for you, which is bad business for me, which is bad business for you.

KRYSTAL
This is about Travis.

CODY
Travis has demons.

Travis nods solemnly.

CODY
The business is a healthy outlet.

KRYSTAL
Why can't he fucking take up rollerblading like everyone else?!

TRAVIS
See? What did I tell you?

CODY
Your language is unattractive.

KRYSTAL
I have six thousand fucking dollars worth of FAM shit that I need to fucking return.

CODY

Travis is good for it. Six grand is
nothing to a Jefferson. Trust your
husband. Trust the Dalton System.

Travis nods confidently. Krystal is deeply troubled.

CODY

Once Travis retires from his J-O-B--

KRYSTAL

--Stop saying that.

CODY

I won't. J-O-B. Just Over Broke. Or
Jerks On Board. Take your pick.

TRAVIS

Jester Of Boss.

CODY

See, it's not about the money--

KRYSTAL

--It is about the money. We can't
afford to throw away forty grand
and benefits for something that
hasn't netted us a dime.

TRAVIS

The business has made us thousands!

KRYSTAL

And it's cost us twice as much.

CODY

Krystal. Listen. This kind of
negativity affects your marriage.

Krystal fumes.

TRAVIS

Cody gets it, honey.

CODY

The most beautiful thing about your
business is that you share it. With
your J-O-B and Travis's J-O-B,
you're climbing separate ladders.
You should be a team.

A long beat. Krystal ashes her cigarette.

KRYSTAL

We have a child. We need an income.

CODY

You'll have income coming out of your nose. You know why? Because Travis is a warrior. A gladiator. A millionaire-in-waiting. He's writing his own legend. He's a Founders Man... he needs his Founders woman.

She furrows her brow. *What the hell does that mean?*

CODY

Being a Founders woman means being... supportive. And available. Carol should have covered this.

Krystal realizes their true agenda. With restrained loathing:

KRYSTAL

I'd like to speak to Travis alone.

CODY

Great. I'll be in the next room.

With unrestrained loathing:

KRYSTAL

Please leave my house. Thank you.

Cody looks to Travis -- you good? -- Travis nods. Cody leaves. Once they're alone:

KRYSTAL

Is that really what you want? A Founders woman?

Travis says nothing, which says everything.

KRYSTAL

You want me to greet you at the door at four AM so you can fuck me?

TRAVIS

That's not what I'm--

KRYSTAL

Because I'll do it.

Travis is stunned. What?

KRYSTAL
I'll do it. I'll be your Founders
woman. I'll be your cheerleader.

TRAVIS
...That's all I've ever wanted.

Krystal smiles. She touches his face.

KRYSTAL
Good. Tonight, when you get home,
I'll be waiting for you.

Travis smiles. Krystal drops the hammer:

KRYSTAL
...and then two hours later, you
will wake up. And you will go to
AAA. And you will work a full day.
And you will come home. And we'll
do it all over again. Because you
have a daughter to support. I won't
be poor again. I won't.

Travis realizes he's trapped.

KRYSTAL
If you leave AAA, I will leave you.

A long beat. Finally, Travis nods. They embrace, leaning into
one another like prize fighters too weary to stand.

OBIE DALTON, II (V.O.)
(prelap)
Side two...

EXT. RECRUITS' HOUSES - NIGHT

SERIES OF SHOTS: Travis in dining rooms, living rooms, and
kitchens, showing charts, handing out pamphlets.

OBIE DALTON, II
...It's lovely to have nice things.

INT. GILL HOME - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Krystal's alarm BLARES. She slaps it and looks over - 2AM.

OBIE DALTON, II (V.O.)
*There are people in this world,
negative people, who resent us
because of our nice things.*

INT. GILL HOME - DESTINEE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Krystal checks in on Destinee -- sound asleep.

INT. TRAVIS'S CAR - NIGHT

Travis yawns and turns up Obie's tape to stay charged. He checks his map, passes a highway sign -- Tallahassee - 64 miles. He sighs, still a ways to go.

INT. GILL HOME - GARAGE - NIGHT

Krystal groggily twists tobacco from a Slim. She unzips the golf bag, pulls the baggie of weed from behind the Sensodyne.

OBIE DALTON, II (V.O.)
*I acknowledge the negative people.
I look them in the eye and I smile.*

EXT. GILL HOME - BACKYARD - NIGHT

Krystal floats in their above-ground pool, spliff in one hand, monitor in the other. She blows smoke at the stars.

I/E TRAVIS'S CAR - NIGHT

Travis glances at his retirement tux in the backseat. He cranks the volume up on his TAPE to drown out his thoughts. The dashboard clock reads 4 AM.

OBIE DALTON, II
I have homes. Plural. very plural.

He takes a deep breath, climbs out of the car, and walks to his door. He fumbles with his keys. Krystal opens the door in only a terry robe. She looks spectacular.

INT. GILL HOME - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Travis and Krystal have sex. C+/B- sex, but sex, nonetheless.

OBIE DALTON, II (V.O.)
I could drive a different car every day of the month, if I so pleased.

INT. GILL HOME - BEDROOM - MORNING

Krystal brushes her teeth -- with FAM! toothpaste. She peeks into the bedroom and sees Travis in his work clothes -- good.

He kisses her on the cheek and runs a wet comb through his hair. He looks absolutely terrible.

INT. TRAVIS'S CAR - AAA PARKING LOT - DAY

Travis stares at the tux in the backseat, tortured. He steels himself, unbuckles to go into work.

OBIE DALTON, II (V.O.)
*But I don't, because that would put
my driver, Emilio, out of a job.*

Before he gets out -- a KNOCK on the passenger window.

It's Cody. In a tuxedo. Cody gives him a big thumbs up.

Travis rests his forehead on the steering wheel. Torn.

INT. AAA OFFICES - CUBICLES/BATHROOM - DAY

Travis, nervous, carries a duffel bag to the bathroom, sweating profusely. Everyone sees him, nobody cares.

He locks the door and unzips his duffel, revealing his tux.

OBIE DALTON, II (V.O.)
*But the nicest things aren't
things. Like the look on Lucille's
face when I bought our first
dressage horse, Doctor Horse.*

He undresses, throws his work clothes in the trash, then, rethinking, reaches in, retrieves his wallet and keys.

He realizes he has no cufflinks for his French cuffs. He folds the cuffs into his jacket, decides that's good enough.

OBIE DALTON, II (V.O.)
*The look on Karen Blythefield's
face when I showed up at our thirty-
year high school reunion... in my
own helicopter.*

He takes one more long look in the mirror -- baggy eyed, pale, and sweaty, in a wrinkled white-tie rental tuxedo.

OBIE DALTON, II (V.O.)
*...and maybe a few of the looks she
gave me later on that night.*

He gives himself a cocky smile and a wink.

INT. AAA OFFICES - DAY

Out staggers Travis, wild-eyed, looking like hell.

OBIE DALTON, II (V.O.)
*You see, people treat a man
differently when they know he's
worth millions.*

He stalks down the aisle of cubicles, picking up speed and confidence, mistaking coworkers' concern for jealousy.

OBIE DALTON, II (V.O.)
*They realize that the restrictions
of their miserable, droning
lives... are optional.*

He reaches his boss's door. He turns to the cubicle-dwellers.

OBIE DALTON, II (V.O.)
*They realize they're in the
presence of a man.*

He throws his hands into the air, brings them into a stage bow. A secretary instinctively ducks under her desk.

Travis's BOSS emerges, appropriately concerned and perplexed. Travis shakes her hand and gives a "ta-ta" wave.

Travis struts out, head high, shaking the hand of each person in the office on his way out. Some are merely confused, others cup his hands and look into his eyes with deep pity.

OBIE DALTON, II (V.O.)
Andrew Jackson. That's a man.

At one cubicle, someone with headphones doesn't know anything is going on. Travis decides to skip that one.

He reaches a printer and a water cooler. He casually pours himself a cone of water, downs it, opens the paper tray, gets a stack of papers, and THROWS it in the air.

OBIE DALTON, II (V.O.)
*Ronald Reagan. That's a man. And a
friend, by the way.*

He beckons people to follow him to the elevator. No one does. Gives one more big "c'mon" wave, then gets in the elevator alone. When the doors close, he gleefully flips double birds.

OBIE DALTON, II (V.O.)
Genghis Khan. Alexander the Great.

INT. AAA OFFICES - LOBBY - DAY

Travis bursts out of the elevator and jogs past a SECURITY GUARD on his way up to deal with the Travis situation. Travis offers a high five, the security guard returns it.

EXT. AAA OFFICES - DAY

Travis explodes outside, where a hundred CHEERING FOUNDERS IBOs stand before a waiting limousine.

OBIE DALTON, II (V.O.)
John Wayne. Jesus of Nazareth.

At the end of the receiving line is Cody, holding a rope attached to a small box. He pats Travis's shoulder and hands off the end of the rope.

Travis looks up to his former coworkers, a cluster of faces at a window. He gives a solemn salute, and yanks the rope, releasing a dozen DOVES. He's sobbing at this point.

OBIE DALTON, II (V.O.)
*These were Founders men before
 Founders existed.*

A LIMO DRIVER, dressed the same as Travis, but with cufflinks, opens the door. Travis pumps his fists. Climbs in.

I/E LIMO - DAY

Travis and Cody wave to the IBOs as the limo pulls away. Cody pours FAM! ginger ale into two champagne flutes. They toast.

OBIE DALTON, II (V.O.)
*A Founders man enjoys respect. Boys
 beg for the approval of others.*

The limo drives a block or two, just out of view of AAA, and pulls over by a swamp, where Travis's old Cadillac and Cody's brand new Cadillac wait.

OBIE DALTON, II (V.O.)
*A Founders man enjoys luxury. Boys
 subsist off the bare necessities.*

It's all Travis could afford. He pays the driver.

OBIE DALTON, II (V.O.)
*A Founders man enjoys security.
 Boys scrape by and barely survive.*

Cody gives Travis a slap on the ass as Travis enters his car. Cody lingers to watch his baby bird spread his wings.

INT. TRAVIS'S CAR - DAY

Obie's tape picks up on the STEREO as Travis starts his car.

OBIE DALTON, II
*A Founders man enjoys life. Boys
 worry their days away.*

Travis checks his mirror. Cody waves. He pulls into the road.

OBIE DALTON, II
*Lemme tell you something -- I don't
 worry about jack diddly squat.*

A MOOSE walks nonchalantly into his path. Again.

Travis blinks. The moose disappears. He blinks again, it reappears. He blinks once more, and the moose is inches from his car.

OBIE DALTON, II
Because I dreamed a big dream.

Travis SLAMS on the brakes, swerving. An old half-full coffee splashes everywhere, soaking dozens of Dalton System books and tapes in his backseat.

Travis scrambles to move the books before they're ruined. His foot releases from the brake pedal.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Cody watches Travis's car roll slowly across an empty road...

OBIE DALTON, II (V.O.)
And now?

...straight into a swamp. Cody SPRINTS towards Travis's car as it sinks beneath the murky water.

OBIE DALTON, II (V.O.)
I am the dream.

The car submerges. Cody stops at the edge of the swamp.

CODY
 Travis!

The water goes still. Cody fumbles to take off his shoes.

Travis's torso LAUNCHES out of the water.

TRAVIS
I'm okay!

He wades toward Cody. He lets out a nervous laugh.

OBIE DALTON, II (V.O.)
I'm a Founders man.

Cody laughs, too. Cody's laughter fuels Travis's and Travis's fuels Cody's until they're both belly-laughing hysterically. Travis stops to catch his breath.

OBIE DALTON, II (V.O.)
What kind of man are you?

An alligator EXPLODES out of the water and tears into Travis. Travis SCREAMS and is pulled under. Cody is frozen.

There's a lot of thrashing and screaming. The water churns red with blood. Cody flees in mortal terror.

INT. CHRISTIANSEN HOME - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Ernie and Bets watch Janet Jackson's "Nasty" video on VHS. Ernie is appalled and ashamed by the content.

BETS
Ernie, he's nine, for Pete's sake.

ERNIE
Why else would he have it, then?

BETS
You really think he's already...

Ernie avoids her gaze. He can't even say it: masturbating.

ERNIE
...It's me, Bets. I'm gone too much. He doesn't have a strong male figure in his life to talk him through these things.

He can't watch anymore. Disgusted, he presses eject.

INT. CHRISTIANSEN HOME - HAROLD'S ROOM - DAY

Harold, wearing the dandelion necklace, colors at his desk. Ernie slowly flicks the lights on and off. Hesitant, scared:

ERNIE
Wee-yoo, wee-yoo. Dad alarm.

He puts the VHS in front of Harold.

ERNIE

Your mother found this while she
was cleaning your room. We don't
have to talk about it, but we can.
If you want.

Harold puts down his pencil. He's embarrassed.

ERNIE

God made us human. It's okay.

Ernie waits for Harold to chime in. He doesn't.

ERNIE

Well, if there's ever anything we
need to talk about, know that I
love you and you can come to me.

Ernie scoops the tape up and exits. Harold locks the door
behind him. He closes his eyes and imagines... something.
Whispers to himself:

HAROLD

Stop... Gimme a beat!

And launches into the choreography from the "Nasty" video,
dancing with the fire of a boy whose dad doesn't understand.

EXT. RIVER RUSH XTREME! - WAVE POOL - DAY

Krystal struggles with a skimmer to scoop out a turd. After
two failed attempts, she gets it in the net and begins
carefully raising it. Just before breach--

POLICE OFFICER

Ma'am?

She loses the turd. Throws the skimmer into the pool in a
huff. She turns and sees two POLICE OFFICERS. Her face drops.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Roped-off crime scene. Cop cars, lights on. Animal control.
Travis's car winched from the swamp. Three or four DETECTIVES
IN WADERS sift through the swamp detritus.

Cody, a total mess, rants and paces beside a COP.

CODY

...I don't have friends, I have
business partners. But he was my
best business partner. Which means
he was my best friend. And--

WOOP WOOP. SHERIFF arrives, lets Krystal out. Cody wipes tears from his eyes, clears his throat, puts on a brave face.

Krystal is in total shock, as if sleepwalking.

KRYSTAL

Cody?

CODY

Krystal. There are no words.

KRYSTAL

Where is he?

CODY

The detectives need some time--

KRYSTAL

What happened?

CODY

It was a cruel, cruel accident.
Life is so very fragile.

KRYSTAL

I guess... I guess it's good you
were with him.

Relieved, Cody embraces her. She leans into him, catatonic.

CODY

It was instant. He didn't suffer.

DETECTIVE (DEEP BACKGROUND)

I found the head!

She pulls away.

KRYSTAL

Why are you wearing this?

Cody realizes he's still in his tuxedo. She begins putting everything together.

KRYSTAL

He went through with it.

CODY

I tried to talk him out of it.

KRYSTAL

No you didn't.

Cody considers, for the first time, that he is responsible for this. It shakes him. A detective leads Krystal away, leaving Cody in a panic.

CODY

It was a freak accident! Nobody could have known! I can fix this!

A GRIZZLED OLD DETECTIVE pats him on the back.

GRIZZLED OLD DETECTIVE

Ain't no one but God can fix this.

A dim light bulb goes off in Cody's head.

INT. AUSTERE FLORIDA MANSION - DAY

Tasteful marble floors. Natural light. BONK.

From a bay window, we see Cody in the yard. He's thrown a rock, but not hard enough. He tries again. BONK. He walks to the window, taps it, realizes it's unlocked.

INT. AUSTERE FLORIDA MANSION - MASTER STUDY - DAY

Mounted animal heads. Old art. Cody furiously paws through a rolodex on a heavy oaken desk. He RIPS a card out, kisses it.

INT. AUSTERE FLORIDA MANSION - FOYER - DAY

Cody hurries to the door, clutching the card to his chest.

He freezes: a CLEANING LADY mops the foyer.

CODY

Hola, Julieta.

CLEANING LADY/JULIETA

Hola, Mister Cody.

CODY

Don't tell Mom, por favor.

He runs out of the house.

INT. CODY'S KITCHEN - DAY

A large house filled with FAM! goods. No curtains. Huge TV.

Cody carefully pins OBIE'S BUSINESS CARD to his VISION BOARD - - an island, bikini babes, Italian suits, a diamond tie bar.

He dials. Holds his breath.

OBIE DALTON, II (ON PHONE)
Hello?

Cody freezes up. Doesn't know what to say.

OBIE DALTON, II (ON PHONE)
Who is this? How'd you get this
number?

CODY
My name is Cody. Cody Bonar.
There's been a tragedy.

INT. GILL HOME - GARAGE - DAY

Krystal, on a cordless phone, traces her finger along the labels of her FAM! stock: Mr. and Mrs. Travis Gill.

KRYSTAL
...what I'm saying is that my
husband was on the job when it--

FOUNDERS CORPORATE REP (ON PHONE)
--Ma'am, your husband was not an
employee of Founders American
Merchandise. He was an independent
business owner. I can say with some
confidence that Founders assumes no
liability, and pays no benefits--

Krystal HURLS the phone across the garage and SCREAMS.

INT. CHRISTIANSEN HOME - BEDROOM - DAY

Ernie struggles to tie his tie in the mirror, alone. It's too short. It's too long. He RIPS it off his neck, violently.

Bets, hearing distress, walks in, putting in an earring.

BETS
You look so handsome. Let me.

He hangs his head. She threads the tie through his collar.

ERNIE
He was younger than me. If
something happened...

She kisses him on the cheek.

BETS
We need to be strong for Krystal.
Travis didn't have many friends.

EXT. FUNERAL HOME - DAY

Hundreds of FOUNDERS IBOs mill about. Ernie and Bets push through, searching for a familiar face.

BETS

I'm gonna try to find Krystal. Get to know somebody. Make a friend!

She leaves Ernie alone. He looks around for someone to talk to, but he doesn't know a soul.

INT. FUNERAL HOME - CHAPEL - DAY

Krystal rests her hand on the closed casket, Destinee asleep on her shoulder. Finally alone with her husband.

KRYSTAL

Well, Travis...

She isn't sure what to say. Taps her hand against the casket a few times to fill the silence.

CODY (O.S.)
Big showing out there.

Cody appears behind Krystal.

CODY

It really is a family.

Krystal ignores him. Cody squeezes Destinee's foot.

CODY

How ya' holding up?

No response.

CODY

Listen, Travis would have wanted to know that his downline was secure--

KRYSTAL

--Once this funeral is over, I never want to see you or anyone involved with FAM ever again.

Cody starts to protest, but hears a THUMPING in the distance.

EXT. FUNERAL HOME - DAY

Ernie has attracted a crowd of a dozen rapt IBOs.

ERNIE
...second baseman, the thinking
man's position. I'm doing my best.
My old man, he was more into --

He pantomimes drinking. A mutter of recognition goes up
through the group.

ERNIE
--but it takes more than a bag of
goose feathers to get me down!

The group CRACKS UP. One IBO nudges his WIFE:

IBO
Isn't he a hoot?!

Ernie smiles to himself. This crowd really gets him. The
THUMPING gets louder.

ERNIE
Anyhoo--

But he's lost them. The mourners crane their necks, looking
for the source of the THUMPING. The shadow of a low-flying
HELICOPTER passes over the crowd.

Cody EXPLODES outside, SPRINTS for a park across the street.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Cody works to restrain the increasingly raucous IBOs.

The helicopter touches down, blowing dust and dirt all over a
crowd that doesn't care one bit.

We don't see the face of the man in the helicopter yet. His
alligator-skinned dress shoe steps out. Then another.

A hand brushes dust from a perfectly-pressed cuff, above a
diamond Rolex with a gaudy 50mm face. The hand adjusts a tie,
held in place with a diamond-studded tie bar, then smooths
the front of an double-breasted pin-striped Italian suit.

From behind, we see the silver-haired figure accept a
bouquet, no doubt originally intended for the bereaved.

The figure works his way through the parting crowd, shaking
hands and patting backs like Joe fucking Biden.

INT. FUNERAL HOME - FAMILY ONLY ROOM - DAY

Ernie raids the sandwich platter while Bets holds Krystal's
hand. An ancient BAPTIST MINISTER counsels.

MINISTER
 ... "O Death, where is thy sting?"
 In our grief, Krystal--

Cody flings open the door, to a ROAR of crowd chatter.

OBIE DALTON, II (60), trickle-down economics personified, struts in. Cody follows behind. Obie turns to Cody:

OBIE DALTON, II
 Are you family?

Cody deflates and shuffles out.

KRYSTAL
 Are you family?

OBIE DALTON, II
 You must be Krystal. Even in this dark time, you are radiant. Obie Dalton, the Second.

KRYSTAL
 I know who you are.

He clocks her coldness. Pats her hand with sympathy.

OBIE DALTON, II
 Your husband was a dear friend and colleague. It's my honor to honor him with my words today.

He moves to Bets, takes the baby, hoists her into the air. Krystal stiffens.

OBIE DALTON, II
 And who's this beauty queen?

KRYSTAL
 That's my daughter.

OBIE DALTON, II
 I was talking about the lady.

He's referring to Bets, who blushes.

BETS
 Bets Christiansen. I'm a friend.

OBIE DALTON, II
 I wish it were under different circumstances. Obie Dalton, the Second.

ERNIE
Oh yeah, from the tapes.

Obie gives Ernie a wink, hands Destinee back to Bets.

OBIE DALTON, II
You are?

ERNIE
Ernie.

Ernie gives Obie a wink of his own.

INT. FUNERAL HOME - DAY

Mid-service. Full house. Rapt crowd. Obie in the pulpit. Krystal, appalled, bounces Destinee on her shoulder.

OBIE DALTON, II
...Travis looked me right in the eye and said: "I want to be you." I told him he was on his way.

Someone WHISTLES.

OBIE DALTON, II
Last week, I was in Paradise.
Paradise Cay, that is -- a little spot I've got just off Venezuela.
And I was taking in the sunset -- and maybe a little extra eye candy--

He trails off, thinking about boobs and butts. Someone WOOPS, refocusing him.

OBIE DALTON, II
Travis is in Paradise. He spent his earthly life making our world more like his heavenly home. In Heaven, everyone's Washington. In Heaven, everyone's a winner. In Heaven, there is no negativity.

An "Amen!" The minister's jaw hangs open.

OBIE DALTON, II
Amen is right! Travis Gill believed in some things. He believed in America. He believed in free enterprise. Travis dreamed big, and then he built that dream out of sweat and grit, passion and time. What do you believe in?

The crowd fucking LOVES it. Krystal fucking HATES it.

OBIE DALTON, II
The good Lord has plans for us to
prosper, folks. God put us in this
incredible country, in this
incredible time -- let's follow His
plan, like Travis followed it.
Let's prosper like Travis
prospered. Let's give a thousand
percent, like Travis. Let's let the
work of our hands build godly
businesses, and build them so big
Travis can see them from Heaven!
Now I'll tell y'all what I told
Travis... "You're on your way."

Obie soaks in the tension:

OBIE DALTON, II
Can I get an "amen?"

CROWD
Amen!

OBIE DALTON, II
I said, can I get an "amen?!"

CROWD
Amen!

OBIE DALTON, II
So Travis can hear us, amen!

CROWD
(chanting)
A-men! A-men! A-men!

Destinee CRIES. Krystal walks her out, jaw clenched. Obie
watches them go, absorbing the praise, arms spread wide.

INT. FUNERAL HOME - HALLWAY - DAY

Krystal, holding Destinee, watches Obie slip into the
bathroom and follows...

INT. FUNERAL HOME - BATHROOM - DAY

She locks the door behind her. He's washing his hands.
Bouquet on the counter.

OBIE DALTON, II
These were for you.

Krystal makes no move to take the bouquet.

KRYSTAL
I want you to make this right.

OBIE DALTON, II
I just flew in at a moment's
notice, at my own expense, to speak
to your husband's legacy.

KRYSTAL
Money.

Obie smirks, imperceptibly. *Of course.*

KRYSTAL
Travis lied to me. He had stopped
paying his life insurance premiums.
It all went to Dalton System tapes
and rallies. I have nothing.

OBIE DALTON, II
I see.

He rinses his hands.

OBIE DALTON, II
All those people out there? They
worked for him. Now they work for
you. I just energized them to work
harder than ever. For you. The
system works. Let it.

KRYSTAL
Your system killed my husband.

He does a quick comb of his hair in the mirror. Perfect.

OBIE DALTON, II
I understand that you're emotional,
but my system didn't kill your
husband. An alligator did.

He opens the door to go.

OBIE DALTON, II
I'm sorry for your loss.

She watches the door close behind him.

Alone, she SLAMS the bouquet against the hand dryer over and
over, a flurry of petals EXPLODING around her.

EXT. FUNERAL HOME - PARK - DAY

Cody escorts Obie back to his helicopter.

CODY
Mr. Dalton, a bit of wisdom?

OBIE DALTON, II
I'm very busy, Mr. Bonar.

CODY
Travis... he was my workhorse. I
can't lose his downline.

OBIE DALTON, II
So keep the wife.

CODY
She can be very... negative.

OBIE DALTON, II
I've noticed. What level are you?

CODY
I went Gold Jefferson last month.

OBIE DALTON, II
And without the FP from the
deceased's downline?

CODY
I'll drop to Franklin.

Obie sucks his teeth. That's bad. He shrugs.

OBIE DALTON, II
So be your own workhorse.

Cody gives him desperate, pleading eyes.

CODY
What if I can't?

Obie squeezes Cody's shoulder like a father imparting wisdom:

OBIE DALTON, II
I reserve one-on-one coaching for
Washington level entrepreneurs.

IN THE CROWD: Krystal, furious, shoves IBOs aside to reach
Obie. She opens her mouth to shout at him--

DUSTY (O.S.)
CROOK! CHARLATAN!

Krystal and Obie both turn, startled, to where Dusty has also shoved his way to the front of the crowd. He has a backpack slung over his shoulder, bulging with documents.

DUSTY

Obie Dalton stole my house! Obie
Dalton stole my house! Obie Dalton
stole my house!

Obie picks up the pace, not wanting to deal with Dusty in front of the crowd. Cody makes a beeline for Dusty.

CODY

This is a man's funeral, Waltrip.

DUSTY

You're all caught in his web! He's
reaching straight into your pock--

Cody SUCKER-PUNCHES Dusty in the neck. Dusty hits the deck, his documents scattering.

CODY

Show some respect!

Obie uses the fracas as a distraction. He climbs in the helicopter, motions for the pilot to go.

CODY

Sorry everyone, this man is a known
crack addict.

The propellers pick up speed, documents flying everywhere.

A CUBAN WOMAN -- out of place in pants and orthopedic tennis shoes -- grabs a flyer out of the air. In bold: **FOUNDERS FRAUD**, and an address. She pockets it, watches Dusty scramble to chase down the flyers. Cody stands over him.

CODY

Scram, before I brain you for good!

Cody, triumphant, turns to Obie for approval.

CODY

Mr. Dalton--

But Obie is fifty feet in the air. Cody's pride turns to deep, deep sadness. He looks around. The crowd thins.

Cody sees Krystal alone, shaking, her eyes welling with tears. He takes a step toward her.

Finally, blessedly, she LOSES IT.

KRYSTAL

Get the fuck away from me! All you fucking people, get away from me!

Cody considers replying, finally walks away. Dusty whimpers on the ground, the only one left.

INT. MALL - NIGHT

Cody licks a soft serve cone. His eyes dart around desperately. He has a stack of pamphlets under his arm.

CODY

Ma'am? Can I interest you--

The WOMAN he's addressing hurries her pace. He extends a pamphlet to an ELDERLY MAN in a Rascal scooter, who scowls.

A well-dressed SHOPPER with a book tucked under his arm smiles broadly and takes a pamphlet. Cody pounces.

CODY

Huge crowds, huh, my man?

SHOPPER

Spring sales. Gotta make every dollar count in this economy.

CODY

No kidding. Tough on working folks.

SHOPPER

You seem like a guy who stays on top of things. Informed.

CODY

You gotta be, in my industry. You also have to be perceptive, which you clearly are.

SHOPPER

I hear ya. Your boss must be very happy with your work.

CODY

He's very happy.

Cody hands over a business card with a cocky smile.

CODY

Because I'm my own boss.

SHOPPER

"Cody BO-nar, BO-nar Enterprises."

CODY
It's "bo-NAR." Good to meet you.

Cody shakes his hand. He's got a live one on the line.

SHOPPER
Pat Stanley. Your own company, huh?
Taxes must be killer. Here.

The shopper hands Cody a business card: "Stanley & Sons."
Cody eyes it suspiciously.

CODY
Actually, in my industry,
everything is a tax write-off.

SHOPPER
Same here...
(hesitant)
Would you believe I have a bona
fide millionaire as my mentor?

The shopper turns over his book -- BUILDING BRIDGES: THE DUKE
BRIDGES METHOD FOR FOUNDERS DISTRIBUTION SUCCESS.

The shopper looks at Cody's pamphlet: DREAM BIG WITH THE
DALTON SYSTEM. He chuckles, opens a briefcase full of books.

SHOPPER
You gotta check out Bridges. Makes
Dalton look like kindergarten.

The blood drains from Cody's face. He SMACKS the briefcase
out of the shopper's hands. Books fly everywhere.

SHOPPER
What the heck, man?

Cody realizes everyone in the food court is staring at him.

CODY
This man attacked me!

Nobody buys it. He gets right in the shopper's face, sneers:

CODY
Stay the freak out of Florida.

Then sulks away.

EXT. GILL HOME - DAY

Krystal, her hair tied back in a bandana, stacks the last of
the FAM! boxes from the water park by the street.

INT. GILL HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

The room feels much more comfortable now, without the FAM! stuff cluttering it up. She goes to the table -- Travis's dirty dishes still there from the night of the fight.

She picks up his water glass, holds it to the light, inspects the greasy fingerprints of her late husband, mind drifting.

She tosses the glass into the sink, SIGHS with regret and relief. She rolls up her sleeves to wash the dishes--

A KNOCK at the door.

INT. GILL HOME - FOYER - DAY

Krystal approaches the peephole, drying her hands. She sees that it's Cody. He gives a friendly wave.

KRYSTAL

Cody, I swear to God, I will--

She's interrupted by the SMACK of Cody pressing an open checkbook against the window. She reconsiders.

EXT. GILL HOME - FRONT PORCH

Krystal sips iced tea. She hasn't offered Cody a glass.

CODY

...if I don't keep your husband's downline, I'm done for. I'll be a laughingstock. I've worked too hard. Just name your price.

KRYSTAL

Name my price for what?

Cody produces a long list of names.

CODY

Travis has two hundred and fourteen people in his immediate downline. If you call them and let them know that I'm replacing Travis as their upline, I'll make this right, and you'll never see me again.

Krystal's brow furrows. *What is this? What's his angle?*

KRYSTAL

Make this right? I'm forty thousand in debt. Can you cover that?

CODY
Not all at once.

He opens his checkbook.

CODY
Can I give you twenty now and the
rest in a month?

Krystal watches him write the monster check. He tears it out.

CODY
Please. The FAM world respects me.
I can't lose that. I'm on Mr.
Dalton's radar now. He invites
Washingtons to Paradise Cay.

The check hangs in the air. She reads Cody's desperate eyes.

KRYSTAL
How can you...?

CODY
I'm a Gold Jefferson.

She squints at him. *Surely that's bullshit.*

KRYSTAL
Let me think about it.

INT. GILL HOME - NIGHT

In her sequined nursing bra, Krystal feeds Destinee. Her mind is far away. She reaches for her keys.

EXT. FUNERAL HOME - NIGHT

Krystal pulls the lid off a trash can. DOZENS of Dusty's **FOUNDERS FRAUD** flyers. She grabs one.

EXT. LAKEVIEW MARINA - NIGHT

Krystal checks an address against Dusty's crumpled up flyer. It's a marina, but it's been forgotten. There's only one boat on the dock, with a dim light in the cabin.

INT. S.S. FREE ENTERPRISE - NIGHT

What was once a luxury schooner is now disgusting. An exotic bird SQUAWKS in a shit-covered cage. Dusty stands behind a bar in the boat's cabin, DOCUMENTS spread everywhere.

KRYSTAL

...I just need you to tell me if it's actually possible to make money through the Dalton System.

DUSTY

No. No. Look at me -- I was a Gold Washington, and after expenses, my business netted me way, way less than what I'd been making as an engineer. Sure, I drove a Ferarri, but I leased it from Obie. I lived in a big house, but Obie's name was on the mortgage. That's how it works. He makes the high-level guys look rich so low-level guys buy in.

KRYSTAL

So Cody's full of shit.

DUSTY

If he's flashing big money, he got it somewhere else. Even Obie's FAM commission doesn't cover his helicopter fuel. The only way to make big money through the Dalton System is if your name is Dalton. The rallies. The books. The tapes. Think how much Travis spent on that stuff a month, multiply that by--

KRYSTAL

--a million Travises.

Krystal does the math in her head. *Jesus Christ.* Dusty sees dollar signs in her eyes.

KRYSTAL

So, hypothetically, could anyone--

DUSTY

--Let me stop you right there.

Cody shuffles through his piles of junk, finally hands her a book: "WHAT A TRIP! HOW I GOT WHERE I AM by Dusty Waltrip." On the cover: Dusty, sassy in seersucker, arms folded confidently across his chest.

KRYSTAL

What am I looking at here?

DUSTY

My autobiography.

KRYSTAL
I'm not going to read this.

DUSTY
No -- because of that book, Obie
thought I was making a play.

KRYSTAL
He doesn't like plays?

DUSTY
A play for his business. Getting to
that second-place tier, Gold
Washington, is worthless outside
FAM. But in the FAM world, I
commanded respect. I was a success.
So I tried to tell my story. I sent
Obie a copy as a gift, and boom.
Bank accounts frozen. Life ruined.

KRYSTAL
So he won't let anyone else do
anything that even comes close to
starting a competing system.

Krystal SIGHS, gathers her things. She stands to leave.

DUSTY
Well it isn't the only system.

She turns. *What?*

DUSTY
Obie didn't invent this scheme.
Obie's upline did. Duke Bridges.

He sees he has Krystal's attention.

DUSTY
When Obie started The Dalton
System, Duke couldn't interfere.
Duke let Obie get him by the testes
somehow.

A long, heavy silence sets in. An idea takes hold of Krystal.

KRYSTAL
So what's to stop someone from
doing the same to him?

DUSTY
You think you can convince Obie
Dalton to just give you a chunk of
his business?

Krystal doesn't respond. She just might.

DUSTY

Obie, Duke -- these guys aren't like you and me. They're monsters, horrible people. They lie. They ruin lives. And Obie learned from Duke's mistake. The only people who get near his testes are the ones who treat him like a God. The weak. The idiots. The sycophants.

A strange smile curls on Krystal's face.

INT. GILL HOUSE - DAY

Krystal opens her front door.

CODY

Thanks for beeping me.

Cody presents a box from the Great American Cookie Factory: a huge cookie cake with "I'm sorry!" in cursive icing.

INT. GILL HOME - DAY

Krystal serves Cody a slice of cookie cake.

CODY

I brought the check.

He lays the check on the table.

KRYSTAL

This is generous. Thank you. And thank you for the cookie cake.

She savors letting Cody stew in the worry. Finally:

CODY

Will you sort things out with the downline? I just want to make sure Travis's work--

KRYSTAL

--I already called them.

Cody nods. Good. He may just get through this.

KRYSTAL

But I didn't tell them you'd be taking over Travis's downline.

He freezes, mid-chew. What? Krystal sits next to him -- a little closer than he anticipates -- with her own slice of cookie cake, and a glass of milk for each of them.

KRYSTAL

I told them you and I would be working together. As partners.

He's speechless.

KRYSTAL

Travis built something special, but it was all potential. I think I know how to get actual results.

She smiles at him. For the first time. Probably ever. Close-range eye contact. Her thigh touching his.

KRYSTAL

Would you like to be my partner?

Cody's head spins -- *is she flirting with me?*

CODY

Don't you think I should --

KRYSTAL

--The only way you'll go Washington and get invited to Obie's island is with Travis's downline. And that's what you want, right?

Cody gulps. He doesn't have much of a choice.

KRYSTAL

So let's be partners.

CODY

Partners?

KRYSTAL

Partners. I know I've been negative in the past, but for all Travis's hard work, the money never came.

Cody begins to reply, but Krystal continues.

KRYSTAL

I had ideas, but he never trusted me enough to let me take the lead.

She picks up Cody's CHECK, folds it, slips it in her bra.

KRYSTAL
But I trust you, Cody.

She takes a long, slow sip of her milk, wipes her mouth.

KRYSTAL
Do you trust me?

INT. S.S. FREE ENTERPRISE - CABIN - NIGHT

Dusty eats Cheez-its and feeds them to his bird, humming along to a Michael Bolton tune.

The deck of his boat CATCHES FIRE. He doesn't notice.

DUSTY
How can we be lovers if we can't be friends? How can we start over if--

BOOM! A second MOLOTOV COCKTAIL shatters a window and the room EXPLODES INTO FLAMES.

Dusty panics. SQUAWK! He can't leave the bird. He braves flames to tuck the bird under his shirt, RUNS for the exit.

SMACK. Sliding glass door. The bird falls to the floor, dead.

He opens the door and dives away as the boat EXPLODES.

INT. MIRTA'S CAR - NIGHT

An orthopedic shoe taps the gas pedal.

The Cuban woman from the funeral, MIRTA HERRARA (50) reaches the marina, checking the address against her own flyer.

An ORLANDO SENTINEL parking tag dangles from the rearview mirror. She's cranky and meticulous, like if Helen Thomas got stranded in Florida. She sings along to the radio:

MIRTA
How can we make love if we can't make amends -- WHAT THE SHIT?!

She SWERVES to miss a car that's exiting way too fast.

She drives on, reaching the marina, where she sees Dusty's boat IN FLAMES. She throws her car in park, grabs her camera.

INT. CODY'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

All FAM! stuff Krystal had taken to the curb now litters Cody's kitchen. Cody pulls a casserole from the fridge. Krystal, impatient:

KRYSTAL
I'm gonna do the talking. Just back
me up when I ask you to.

CODY
I understand.

Satisfied, she takes the dish and whisks it into...

INT. CODY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Placing it in front of Ernie, napkin tucked into his shirt, sopping gravy off his plate with a roll. Cody and Krystal rejoin the table.

ERNIE
So, Cody. Noles, Gators, or Canes?

CODY
Um. Noles.

ERNIE
Ah, ya jerk! Guess we gotta fight
now! No, I'm just kidding with you.

Krystal laughs much too hard at Ernie's joke.

CODY
Yeah, of course.

BETS
We saw that Fried Green Tomatoes on
Tuesday. Have you seen it?

ERNIE
"Chick flick," that's what I call
that movie. Heh!

Krystal laughs too hard at this one, too.

CODY
No, haven't gotten to it yet.

More scraping. Krystal polishes off her glass of wine.

KRYSTAL
--guys, I'm drinking alone here. I
paid good money for a babysitter.
Glasses. Pronto. Widow's rights.

BETS
A little wine never hurt.

She pushes their glasses to the middle. Krystal pours tall.

KRYSTAL

Cody, I know you've got more of
this lying around. Help me out.

He goes to a cabinet, brings another bottle to the table.

KRYSTAL

Be a doll and open her up.

Cody gives her a look. She smiles sweetly. He relents.

KRYSTAL

Travis's FAM friends have been
stopping by -- it's an incredible
community. I'm going to church with
the Winstons, sweet people.

BETS

Oh, how nice!

KRYSTAL

How's Harold?

CODY

Who's Harold?

KRYSTAL

Their kid, Cody.
(to Ernie)
How was his game?

ERNIE

He's got his old man's reflexes,
and that's not a good thing!

KRYSTAL

You're hilarious!

BETS

He's growing up so fast. He's
been... discovering himself.

KRYSTAL

Have you had the talk?

ERNIE

I tried. Thing is, I have to fight
Mr. Van Grundegaard tooth and nail
for the time to be a --

Cody senses an opening.

CODY
--are you unhappy at your job,
Ernie?

The mood chills. Krystal barely contains her rage.

ERNIE
Oh, I don't know if I want to get
into this right now, Cody.

KRYSTAL
Yeah, let's not.

Another heavy silence. Krystal shoots Cody a withering look,
then clears her throat.

KRYSTAL
It's gonna be tough. With Destinee.

Bets tsks sympathetically, takes Krystal's hand.

BETS
You're so, so strong.

KRYSTAL
Thank you. I really love you guys.
(beat)
Things were going so well for us!
We were -- gosh, here I go.

BETS
Go on. Let it out.

KRYSTAL
Warm up my glass, would you?

She pushes her glass to Cody.

KRYSTAL
Your guests could use a little
more, too.

Cody, flustered, pours more wine for everyone.

KRYSTAL
I know this is a strange thing to
talk about, but the money! It was
coming so fast! I didn't want to
tell you, Ernie, because you've
been so good to me, but I was ready
to leave River Rush for good.

CODY
You'd be surprised how quickly--

Krystal reaches for a roll, intentionally spilling Cody's wine in his lap.

KRYSTAL
Oh god, Cody, I'm so sorry!

CODY
No, it's okay. These are old pants.

KRYSTAL
Go change. You have guests.

He hesitates. Krystal waits for him leave before continuing.

KRYSTAL
No, I can't quit now. I need the routine, at least for a while.
(beat)
We just shared everything, you know? And the business was part of that. A single professional pursuit. That's so intimate. And perfect for a family, especially with money coming in like it was.

Ernie sips his wine.

KRYSTAL
I gotta tell you, it's nuts. Here I am, a business that's growing like kudzu, and no partner to share it with! And there you are, gorgeous wife, beautiful kid, having to fight tooth and nail to spend just a few extra hours being the one thing you really want to be: a dad. There for all the little league games, all the talks.

ERNIE
Yeah. My dad was never really much of a talker. He was more into--

He pantomimes drinking. Krystal smiles sadly.

KRYSTAL
Yeah, you've mentioned that.
(beat)
Travis and I were going to a conference this weekend. I want to go -- for Travis's sake -- but not alone. You've been such good friends for so long. It would mean so much if you came with me.

Bets is nervous, but Ernie's swept up in the excitement.

ERNIE
You know what?

He looks at Bets. There's a series of looks and shrugs. She gives her blessing.

Cody returns in fresh pants, sits without a word.

ERNIE
Heck. A weekend trip could be fun!

Krystal cocks an eyebrow confidently at Cody, who's speechless. She raises her glass.

KRYSTAL
To family.

Ernie thrusts his glass to the middle, sloshing it. Cody, in shock, raises his glass, too. Finally, reluctantly, Bets.

KRYSTAL
Ugh, I haven't smiled since...
Well. I haven't smiled in a while.

ERNIE
This is certainly something.

KRYSTAL
I'm gonna get started on dessert.
Ernie. Bets. I've been so down
lately, why don't we do something
fun? There's a game Travis and I
used to play.

She looks at both of them. Considers them each as humans, the good and the bad. All of it. All of them.

KRYSTAL
Bets, I want you to say something
you want. Anything. A vacation to
Hawaii. A dinette set. A Mercedes.
Anything in the world.

BETS
Oh, we don't need for much.

KRYSTAL
And Ernie, every time Bets says
anything, I want you to name a
person you'd love to do something
nice for. A friend. A colleague.
Your mailman. Anyone.

CODY
Your high school principal.

KRYSTAL
Good, Cody. Now write it all down!
Two columns! I'll be right back.

She heads to the kitchen, points at Cody.

KRYSTAL
I need you to show me how that
fancy oven works!

Cody follows her to the kitchen.

Bets and Ernie look at each other. Shrug.

ERNIE
Might be a hoot.

Bets pulls a pen and pad from her purse. She thinks hard.

BETS
Well, our trash cans stink no
matter what I do. We could use new
trash cans.

ERNIE
Phil Boggan.

BETS
His daughter just got into the
nursing program at UCF.

Ernie nods -- isn't that something. She writes it all down.

INT. CODY'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Krystal drags Cody far enough away from the door that they're out of earshot. He's in awe. She's pissed.

CODY
How did you do that?

KRYSTAL
I told you this was my meeting.

CODY
I know, but the Dalton System is
very specific, so we have to--

Krystal doesn't flinch. This isn't a negotiation.

KRYSTAL

--I told you this was my meeting.

CODY

I know, but I'm Gold Jefferson.
Even if they come aboard, they have
to respect--

KRYSTAL

--You aren't Gold Jefferson. We are
Gold Jefferson. And this is my
meeting.

CODY

Mr. Dalton says--

She slaps Cody's ear -- SMACK. Hard. He stares in disbelief.

KRYSTAL

How many times have you tried to
recruit Ernie? Ten? Twenty?

She takes a step closer to him.

KRYSTAL

You want to build our downline?
Take a look in that dining room.
It's happening. All you have to do
is keep your mouth shut. We're
going to get results. No matter
what. Fuck the Dalton System.

CODY

Don't talk about the Sys--

SMACK. Another step closer.

He opens his mouth but stops. Doesn't matter -- SMACK.

She steps closer again. They're face to face now. She wraps
one hand around his throat and watches his eyes roll gently
back into his head.

He's breathing hard. He is hard.

She twirls her other hand around his belly button, and draws
it up...

...past his chest...

...past his chin...

...and onto his lips.

CODY
I'll listen to you.

She nods. Good boy. She has him completely, and is completely intoxicated by the power.

KRYSTAL
We're one step closer to Paradise
Cay, Cody.

She pushes her finger gently into Cody's mouth.

KRYSTAL
Say thank you.

She lowers Cody to his knees.

CODY
(whispered)
Thank you.

Cody awaits further instruction, not daring to move a muscle until Krystal tells him to.

INT. CODY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The list is going strong. It's multiple pages now.

ERNIE
Ronnie Stout!

BETS
A Caribbean Cruise!

ERNIE
Dr. Gregory!

BETS
Baseball camp for Harold!

ERNIE
Debbie James!

BETS
Pearls!

ERNIE
You already have pearls.

She thinks about it.

BETS
Bigger pearls.

They cry with laughter. They've never had such fun.

INT. CODY'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Cody is on his knees, face buried deep under Krystal's dress. She stands with one foot propped up on the counter, like George Washington crossing the Delaware.

She moans and presses into him, pushing him just enough to bump into his refrigerator -- knocking his vision board to the ground.

END OF PILOT.